Crises of Potato Glut

4312. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that potato glut crises has been faced at various places this year;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government propose to draw a long-term plan for providing storage, processing and preserving facilites;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK) : (a) and (b) No glut crises on potato has been reported from any part of the country except Karnataka. In fact production of potato in the country has marginally decreased to 21966.2 thousand tonnes in the current year from 25000.1 thousand tonnes (1999-2000) and 23610.7 thousand tonnes (1998-2000).

(c) to (e) The Government of India is already implementing programmes for providing storage, processing and preserving facilities for horticulture produce including potato.

The Department of Agriculture & Cooperation is implementing schemes through National Horticulture Board (NHB) which include :

(i) Development of commercial horticulture through post harvest management;

(ii) Capital investment subsidy scheme for construction/expansion/ modernization of cold storages and storages for horticulture produce.

So far, 52 number of refrigerated transport vehicles, 159 grading/packing centres, 75 pre-cooling units and 424 cold storages have been assisted under the programmes/schemes implemented by NHB.

In addition to above, Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), an organization under the Ministry of Commerce, has initiated the following programmes :

(i) Integrated programmes for pre and post harvest management;

(ii) Preparation of Post harvest manuals in regional languages to educate farmers/growers;

(iii) Promotion of pack house concept in the production areas including cold chain linkage right from farm to the consumer; and

(iv) Vapour heat treatment to control flies in horticulture produce on pilots scale.

The Department of Food Processing Industries, under the Ministry of Agriculture, is implementing the following programmes :

(i) Establishment of Post-harvest infrastructure and cold chain facilities for food processing and integrated projects of mushrooms, hops, gherkins and babycorn.

(ii) Establishment of food processing industrial estate (Food parks).

(iii) Setting up/expansion/modernization of food processing units.

(iv) Development/modernization of meat processing.

(v) Setting up of Food Processing & Training Centres (FPTCs).

(vi) Strenghthening of backward linkages to agro-raw material sources.

Use of Parthenium by Florists

4313. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware that Parthenium, being used by florists in preparation of bouquet on large scale, causes a variety of allergies and skin diseases;

(b) if so, the steps taken to stop use of white florists of Parthenium by the florists; and

(c) the steps taken to initiate a country-wide deweeding programme to get rid of it ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK) : (a) and (b) Sir, there are no reports about the use of